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CHALLENGE

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM · LUCHE POR EL COMUNISMO · PLP

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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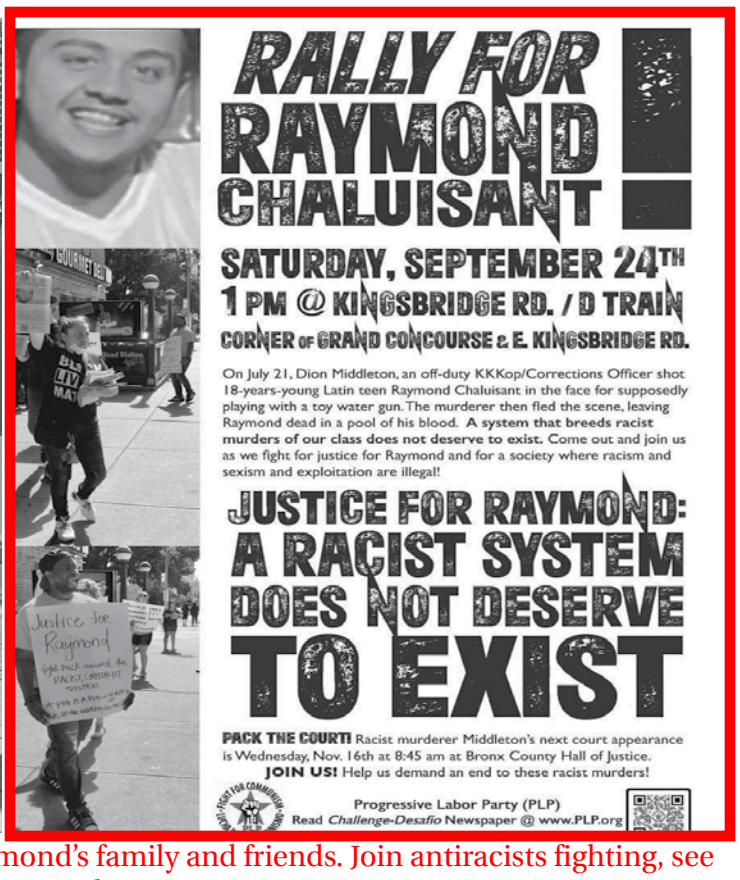
JUSTICE FOR RAYMOND

HOW DO YOU SPELL RACIST?!

NYPD


RALLY FOR RAYMOND CHALUISANT
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24TH
1 PM @ KINGSBRIDGE RD. / D TRAIN
CORNER OF GRAND CONCOURSE & E. KINGSBRIDGE RD.
On July 21, Dion Middleton, an off-duty KKKop/Corrections Officer shot 18-years-young Latin teen Raymond Chaluisant in the face for supposedly playing with a toy water gun. The murderer then fled the scene, leaving Raymond dead in a pool of his blood. A system that breeds racist murders of our class does not deserve to exist. Come out and join us as we fight for justice for Raymond and for a society where racism and sexism and exploitation are illegal!
JUSTICE FOR RAYMOND: A RACIST SYSTEM DOES NOT DESERVE TO EXIST
PACK THE COURT! Racist murderer Middleton's next court appearance is Wednesday, Nov. 16th at 8:45 am at Bronx County Hall of Justice.
JOIN US! Help us demand an end to these racist murders!
Progressive Labor Party (PLP)
Read Challenge-Desafio Newspaper @ www.PLP.org

Left photo: Multiracial and multigenerational rally led by PL'ers and Raymond's family and friends. Join antiracists fighting, see flyer on right for details, to smash racist police terror.

The Bronx, NY, September 10 –-Today Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members and friends joined with family and friends of Raymond Chaluisant to rally for justice for Raymond who was murdered by racist KKKop Dion Middleton (See CHALLENGE, 8/24). At the rally, youth led chants demanding justice including "How do you spell racist? NYPD," "If we don't get it (justice) shut it down" and "white cop, Black cop all the same; racist terror is the name of their game." A sound system was used so neighbors could hear the speeches and chants. A picket line with signs caught people's attention. Participants reached out to let people passing by know about the racist murder and the need for all students and workers to join the fight against racism and the capitalist system. Neighborhood folks welcomed our flyers and our paper, CHALLENGE. In fact, we ran out of both, distributing 200 copies.

On July 21, off-duty kkkop Dion Middleton robbed the working class of 18-years-young Latin teen Raymond Chaluisant by shooting him in the face for playing with a toy water gun. The murderer then fled the scene, leaving Raymond dead in a pool of his blood. The murder of Raymond was no accident. NYPD and all police departments teach cops to view Black, Latin and immigrant youth and workers as criminals who can be killed with impunity.

This whole capitalist system depends on and builds racism to keep workers divided and makes even more profits by paying

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JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

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SCAN ME

OUR FIGHT

☆Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

☆The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

☆Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

☆While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

☆Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

☆Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

☆Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

☆Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

☆Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

☆Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

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Editorial

The queen Is dead;
LONG LIVE THE WORKING CLASS!

In 1933, the British royal family shows its true colors with a Nazi salute. From left: Queen Elizabeth's mother, the wife of soon-to-be-King George VI; eight-year-old Princess Elizabeth, the future Queen; Princess Margaret, her younger sister; and Prince Edward of York, better known as the Duke of Windsor, who had a mutual admiration society with Adolph Hitler. (Source: The Sun, July 18, 2015).

The nine-mile line to mourn Queen Elizabeth II, the monstrous figurehead for degenerate Nazi-loving billionaires and callous capitalist bosses, reminds us that the working class still struggles through a dark night of false unity with the ruling class. Through Elizabeth's seventy years as the royal family's number-one parasite, British imperialism exploited, enslaved, tortured, and slaughtered countless workers across the globe (see box on the British atrocities on page 6). The Queen "spent a lifetime smiling and waving at cheering native people around the world, a sort of living ghost of a system of rapacious and bloodthirsty extraction" (New York Times, 9/11). As the monarchy looted an estimated $28 billion from the international working class, more than 20 percent of the British population sank into poverty (House of Commons Library, April 2022).

But even though many in our class seem enthralled by the royal family's wretched excess and lavish pageantry, including the $9 million it took to put Elizabeth in a box, a reckoning is coming. As of September 1, a week before the Queen's death, more than 150,000 workers—including postal and telecom workers, trash collectors, and lawyers—were on strike to protest stagnant salaries shredded by double-digit inflation. Despite no support from the so-called Labour Party, 45,000 transportation workers walked off their jobs, paralyzing train, subway, and bus lines across the country for days. Teachers, nurses, and doctors will soon have strike votes of their own, and the country's two largest trade unions are pushing for coordinated strikes in "one of the most significant waves of industrial unrest the United Kingdom has seen since the 'winter of discontent' in the late 1970s" (cnn.com, 9/1). Workers will always fight back!

As escalating inter-imperialist rivalry leads to world war, the murderous essence of the British monarchy and all the global ruling classes will be exposed. When that day comes, what Progressive Labor Party does to organize workers now will make all the difference. It will determine whether the millions shedding tears for the dead Queen will continue on into the furnaces of fascism and imperialist war or whether they'll join PLP and our Red Army in the fight for a classless society—for communism.

Inequality: as capitalist as queen and country

Following World War II, Britain, like much of Europe, installed a social safety net to counter workers' gains under socialism in the Soviet Union. But with each passing decade, as the British Empire waned and expired, the rulers no longer had imperialist super-profits to prop up their failing profit system at home. Wages, services, and living standards were cut to the bone.

In recent years, untold thousands in Britain have died from neglect by a financially gutted National Health Service (independent.co.uk, 1/28/17).

Nearly one in five children live in households where people go hungry regularly(borgenproject.org). Super-exploited immigrants have suffered the most from these racist attacks. Amid this misery, the Queen sat placidly on her throne with her heap of stolen jewels, gently spewing the big lie that the British Crown actually cared about its loyal subjects. In real life, Elizabeth cared only about her horses, her plump rat dogs, her Nazi sympathizer husband, her appalling children (including rapist Prince Andrew and famously racist and corrupt Prince Charles, finally promoted to King), and the finance capitalists who run the country as a very junior partner to U.S. imperialism.

Gross inequalities are part and parcel of capitalism, a system where humanity takes a back seat to the drive for maximum profit. In 2020, a girl born in "the most deprived areas" of England could expect to have only 52 healthy years—as compared to 71 years in "the least deprived areas" (theguardian.com, 4/25). That Queen Elizabeth stayed hale and hearty into her mid-90s is no cause for celebration. It's the story of a vampire whose wealth and privileges were sucked from the blood and toil of the working class.

The only good royal is a dead royal

Not everyone was fooled by "likely the most famous person on the planet" (Vanity Fair, 9/8). In the days after Charles grabbed the crown and scepter, some workers faced arrest for holding signs declaring "Not My King," reminiscent of the "Not My President" protests by anti-Trump workers in the U.S. The problem with reformist opposition is that it accepts the dead-end political superstructures of capitalism, whether electoral "democracy" or a "constitutional" monarchy. In either case, it keeps workers tied to lesser-evil bosses and straitjacketed by the profit system.

Many Black workers and immigrants from one-time British colonies used social media to critique the bloody, racist history of British colonialism. While this was better than mourning a dead figurehead, national liberation politics doesn't aim to smash class society; it wants workers to be ruled by bosses who look like them. This class-collaborationist thinking feeds the deadly trap of nationalism. It ultimately serves the dominant liberal rulers in enlisting working-class support for World War III.

Workers' fightback is the future

Whether the bosses use monarchs or presidents or generals to control and pacify the working class, we have no decent future under capitalism. Whatever reform crumbs they give us will be clawed back in the inevitable next crisis of a chaotic system. In the muck and mire of this political cesspool, it is the Party's job to challenge dead-end ideas that can lead only to fascism and global war.

The workers in the Soviet Union and China got a small taste of what is possible in a society built by and for workers. Basic needs for all—food, housing, health care, literacy—were foremost. Racism and sexism were attacked as rotten ideas that divide the working class. While these socialist societies wound up reverting to capitalism, they pointed the way to what a communist world could be. For our Party, the first step is to continue to immerse ourselves in working class struggles, where we can smash the all-class unity the bosses are so desperate to build. PLP has a different vision. We see a future where workers will turn the guns around and end capitalism for all time with communist revolution. Join us!✪

Fight for Flores remains strong, communist ideas take root

Nearly three years,photos above from 2019 and 2020 fightbacks, after Alex Flores' life was snuffed out by kkkops worker's are keeping the fight aliive.

LOS ANGELES, September 20—"I found the summer project so inspiring! I just wanted to find a way to do that stuff back home in LA too." This is the sentiment that brought five new young people to our monthly Flores family action against police murder. After nearly three years of activity in the South Central neighborhood, the added burst of new, young energy reinvigorated the struggle.

On November 19, 2019, the LAPD shot and murdered Alex, 34 years old, near South Central Avenue and East 28th Street. Through this antiracist work led by mainly women workers, more people understand the true role of the police in a capitalist society and see PLP as leading the fight against their murders.

Canvass for Alex

The Flores family remains courageous and hasn't allowed their fight to diminish the two and a half years since Alex Flores was murdered. PLP has worked alongside the family and made it clear that our support is not going anywhere. This strong working class unity has empowered the community to be relentless against police terror.

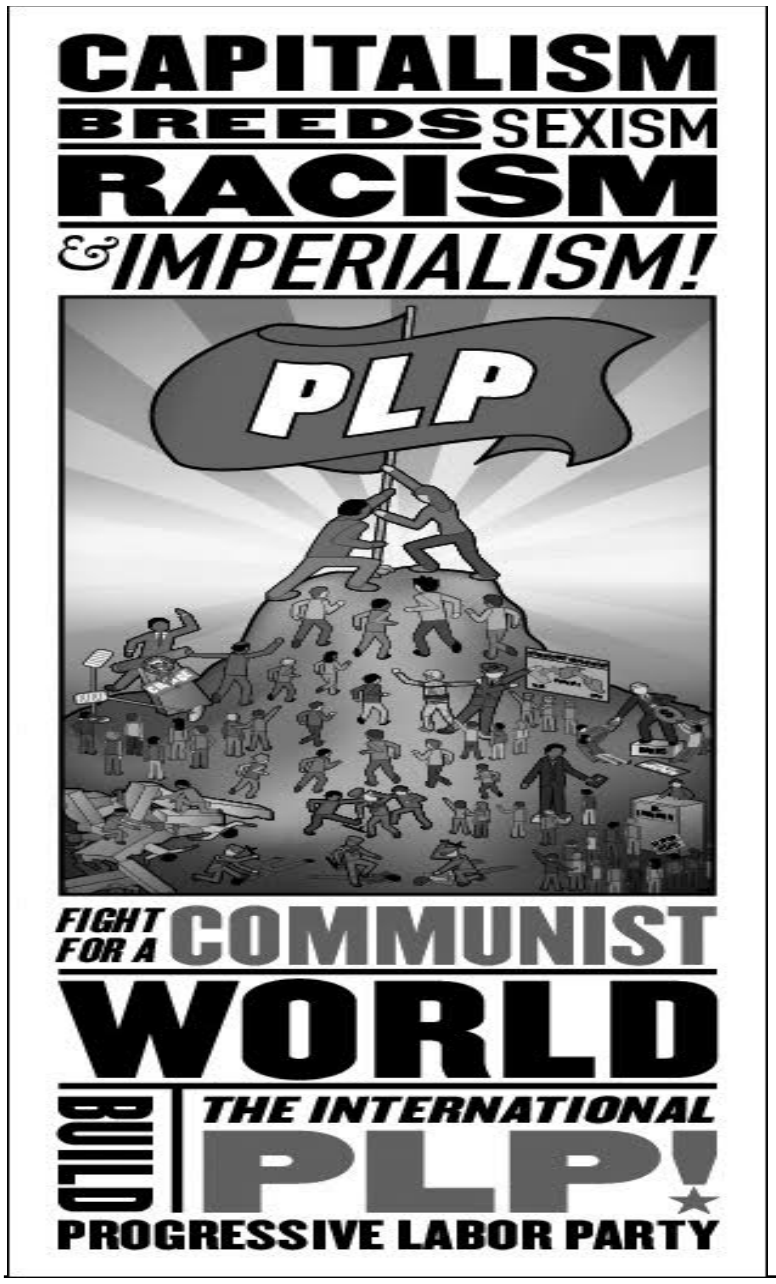
This month's action was neighborhood canvassing. In three large groups we went door to door on the blocks where Alex Flores grew up and where his parents still reside. Many knew Alex or heard of his story. Of course, many residents had their own experiences with police harassment, brutality, or murder. This is why we built a concentration in this neighborhood among the most oppressed sections of our class. They have the most to gain from overthrowing this rotten system.

A member of the Flores family has been meeting regularly with a Party club for about a year and has taken more of a leading role in organizing other impacted families in anticapitalist struggles. As we canvassed, she actively gave out CHALLENGE to her neighbors, demonstrating to participants in the mass organization her commitment to getting out Progressive Labor Party's ideas.

What you do counts

Our consistent efforts are starting to bear fruit. At one of the doors we knocked on, a Latin worker recognized CHALLENGE from our monthly events and signed up for a subscription. The young students who attended our summer project organized others in their base to join us in this month's effort. One of their base members who joined is, in fact, a college student at an east coast campus who happens to be good friends with a base member of a PLP campus leader there as well. Our small effort and modest impact is stretching coast-to-coast! We still have a lot of work to do in the consolidation process with the new people around us, but our future is certainly bright. Power to the working class ✪

Smash fascist terror vs. workers from Haiti



Washington, DC, September 19—Today Progressive Labor Party (PLP) members brought communist politics to a rally of 30 supporters of the Haitian Bridge Alliance at the White House. Protestors declared that nothing has changed since the racist, horrific attack on workers from Haiti, escaping U.S. imperialism, by the U.S. Border Patrol a year ago (see photo). The Biden administration continues to apply Trump-era Title 42 policy to keep immigrants out of the U.S. This racist repressive policy is based on false public health fears of disease that even the CDC has denounced. Another example of how the finance capitalist Big Fascists are just as virulently racist as Trump. The Big Fascists (see glossary on page 6) are more dangerous because they use fake, liberal rhetoric in attempt to build all-class unity and patriotism for imperialist war. They do this all while ratcheting up racist attacks on the working class.

PL'ers active in Public Health Awakened joined the event, the first in a week of action calling for the U.S. to follow its own rules and welcome asylum seekers from Haiti. As we fight alongside our class, it is imperative to point out that the state was created to protect the interest of the ruling class. The very U.S.-led empire that created the conditions for unlivable working conditions in Haiti is the same imperialist empire that is now refusing to provide asylum to the workers whose lives they ruined. Capitalism creates the conditions of misery, and then blame the victim.

Conversations against racism

Protestors were excited to see the articles on Haiti in CHALLENGE. One expressed delight that the paper was in Spanish. A young Black worker used the QRCode to access the newspaper on his phone.Then we joined a conversation with a worker from Telemundo and another speaker who had denounced racism toward Black workers.

The Telemundo worker from the Dominican Republic (DR) described how of bus drivers in his homeland regularly refused to pick up their class sisters and brothers from the neighboring island of Haiti. He shared that he had asked a driver why he did not pick up a young man. The driver replied, "Because he's Black." The worker got off the bus in anger and solidarity. Racism is a creature of capitalism, designed by the bosses to divide workers and reap superprofits. It is good for our class to reject all forms of racism, brought on by bosses or members of our own class.

This engagement by PL'ers followed last year's protest of the racist attacks on Haitian migrants in a letter published in the Washington Post. As a crisis of capitalism and civil war expands in Haiti, there will be more workers and families seeking asylum.

As members of PLP and friends in public health declare, we need multiracial unity and revolution to smash this racist sexist capitalist system! ✪

Pandemic NOT over

Capitalism is the disease, communism is the cure

Washington, DC, September 19—Protests for better healthcare under capitalism continued at the White House as a Progressive Labor Party (PLP) member joined 50 people suffering from Long Covid-19. We demanded that the Biden administration expand research into conditions that follow viral infections such as Covid-19, mono, bird flu, and other infections.

Contrary to liberal president Joe Biden's false claim, the "pandemic is NOT over." The marchers called for a federal program like the Ryan White Act for HIV that could provide wrap-around services for students and workers suffering from Long Covid-19 and similar long-term illnesses. The pandemic is far from over! And racist healthcare for all workers will never be over until capitalism is. We need the working class to rule the world.

Capitalism is always willing to discard disabled workers who they can't exploit for profit. As Friedrich Engels wrote in 1845, "the class which at present holds social and political control [the bourgeoisie] places hundreds of proletarians in such a position that they inevitably meet a too early and an unnatural death." The ruling class is fine with the social murder of our class. But we can't let them get away with murder.

Capitalism will always put profits over worker's lives. Fight for communism where our health and safety is primary.

Covid under capitalism remains deadly

Later that day, a PL'er joined others in a listening session with the Office of Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Education to explain how schools should better provide equal education to students with disabilities. The PLP member has been meeting with friends and fighters with disabilities to make demands around education sparked by the Covid-19 pandemic. These include virtual learning, high quality filtration/ventilation including HEPA filters, masks, and accommodations for students with symptoms. This is what communists would do if we had to manage Covid-19. By removing the profit motive, our class would be able to run society based on needs and commitment.

Covid related illnesses often cause damage to multiple organ systems including the brain, heart, blood vessels, and GI tract. Symptoms include fatigue, headache, cognitive impairment and rashes. Doctors have trouble making a diagnosis and patients thus go undiagnosed. The multiple specialists they then see can make treatment elusive. The waxing and waning of Covid symptoms adds to the confusion. Even exercise can make symptoms worse.

Research from from the World Health Network's Long COVID Symposium (9/15) has found clotting processes and damage to the lining of blood vessels, the persistence of viral particles and metabolic changes including dysautonomia (e.g.. fast heart rate when standing). But more work is needed in this area. The bosses don't care about supporting these workers and students, thus condemning many to a life of disability and early death.

As we fight for and build a communist society that values all workers and supports their efforts to learn and contribute, we can support people with disabilities and bring them and their particular struggles into the PLP. ✪

Smash U.S. Gestapo—workers have no borders

NEW YORK CITY, September 21—Governor Greg Abbott launched Operation Lonestar, a belligerent, racist campaign to criminalize workers desperate to escape the horrors of U.S. imperialism. In a clear demonstration of the bitter rivalry between the Small Fascist conservatives and the Big Fascist liberals, the Abbott administration transported migrant workers, arriving on the Texas border, to democrat run states along the Northeast. This is life under capitalism.

A few months into the offensive more than 11,000 migrant workers from Latin America and Africa have been bussed in working class neighborhoods (U.S.A Today, 9/2) with thousands being dumped in New York City shelters with no money, clothing, and given few resources to ensure their survival (The City, 9/16).

In response to this abhorrent racist attack on our class, PLP members involved in college campuses and community organizations that fight for housing have been circulating literature to students and workers facing racist displacement and homelessness. Below is an excerpt of the flyer:

Around the world, close to 100 million workers have been displaced. Whether from starvation, unemployment, environmental catastrophes, soaring rents, or real estate speculation, the capitalist system sacrifices workers daily for profits.

Right now, we're seeing the global capitalist crisis in full swing as thousands of new migrants arrive from Texas to NYC. Migrant workers are fleeing imperialist violence only to find themselves in New York City, the world's wealthiest, so-called sanctuary city. NYC is also one of the most unequal, segregated racist cities in the world. They will join their Black (52 percent), Latin (22 percent), and white (48 percent) working-class siblings who make up the bulk of the City's shelter system (Daily News, 1/22/20).

To make matters worse, members of our class are used as pawns in a battle between an increasingly divided U.S. ruling class. On the one hand is Texas Governor Abbott, who represents the Trumpian Small Fascist faction and domestic fossil fuel bosses like Charles and David Koch. This wing is cruelly using immigrant families in the fight with the liberal Big Fascist imperialist wing (see Glossary, page 6) fronted by Biden. Biden represents the main financial, corporate, and big real estate wing of the capitalist rulers.

We demand housing for ALL! Mayor Adams says there's no money: A LIE! These bosses are only here to serve profit, not working people. For decades New York State has given developers billions of dollars in tax breaks to build luxury housing. But, communism will mean we workers will organize ourselves to be housed and cared for.

As communists, we build confidence in our class's ability to lead. The reform demands in this housing struggle are for politicians to stop giving our tax money to developers, build 100 percent low-income housing, open all vacant buildings and apartments, and stop evictions. Being involved in this fight helps build up masses of workers to see the need to run the world. As long as for-profit housing exists, workers will never have access to safe, decent housing. This is why we must fight for communism!

Black, Latin, Asian, white, all workers must UNITE!

Both Democrats and Republicans cynically use immigrants to build their bases for the upcoming elections. While Small Fascist Abbott busses migrants to sanctuary haven NYC to rile up his racist base, Biden helped Obama deport more migrants than any president in history at the time. Meanwhile, top Black KKKop, Big Fascist Eric Adams smiles to welcome migrant workers, and then stuffs them into already overcrowded shelters, thus pitting homeless workers against migrant workers as he helps real estate developers and landlords jack up rents and displace more workers.

The Big Fascist liberals like Adams and Biden do not care about migrant, Black, Asian, white, Latin, or any workers. As China and the U.S. inch closer toward World War III, the Big Fascists will sacrifice more workers to their economy, whether it be in the form of mass incarceration or more homelessness. Biden, openly preparing for war with China, sees immigrants as cannon fodder for his imperialist ventures. The working class must not allow the fascists, Big and Small, to divide us. Our strongest weapon is our unity, and we will need to come together in solidarity to resist these fascists.

Capitalists and all its agents are the enemies of the working class. Capitalism doesn't deserve to exist. Be it through climate or economic disaster, nuclear war, or pandemics, capitalism is destroying the world. We need international, working-class unity to fight for communism, a system in which the welfare and prosperity of the working class are above all else because we will abolish the profit motive. Join PLP! Join the fight against displacement! ✪

Inflation, morbid symptom of capitalism's crises

Inflation is the latest way the capitalist system's crises are deepening the oppression of workers around the world. Capitalism is driven by competition and profit accumulation and generates global economic and political instability, preventing stability and wellbeing for the world's working class. While inflation is depriving U.S. workers of some of life's necessities, the U.S.'s export of inflation to other countries is even more devastating. We fight to replace this absurd system with a worker-run planned economy – communism.

What is Inflation?

Inflation is a rise in average prices of goods and services. In the U.S., the annual core inflation rate rose to 6.3 percent in August. Adding in food and energy costs lifts the inflation rate to 8.3 percent annually. Food prices alone in the U.S. are rising over 11 percent annually, increasing hunger and poverty, while rising at an even faster pace in less developed countries. Wages are not rising similarly so workers' purchasing power is falling.

After 40 years of relative stability, why inflation in the U.S. now? Causes include the monopoly power of corporations, government aiding corporations, and COVID shutdowns and shortages caused by supply chain disruptions and war. Wage raises are not a cause of inflation but an effort to keep up.

Different responses to crises, same goal of maximizing profit

Capitalists and the government responded differently to the financial crisis of 2007-2009 and today's ongoing COVID crisis.

Threats to profits during the 2007-2009 crisis led capitalists to lay off workers and cut wages and benefits (labor costs account for 60-70% of production costs). To suppress resistance, the capitalists divide and weaken workers through racism and sexism, oppose new union creation (e.g., Amazon), and outlast or break strikes. Unemployment (which reached 10% in 2009) served to further weaken workers, as competition for jobs led to lower wages. Labor's share of national income fell while productivity (output per worker) rose sharply and profits remained strong during this earlier period.

COVID created another profitability crisis for capitalists with consumer spending plummeting and supply chain disruptions forcing up the bosses' costs. As the pandemic began to recede, the bosses faced a relative labor shortage (the official unemployment rate reached 3.5% of the labor force, the lowest point in decades) because many workers quit working or retired during the "great resignation." To recruit workers back, many firms raised money wages (albeit lower than the rate of inflation) and improved benefits slightly, which cut into their profits. The resurgence in the labor movement, with union organizing and strikes, compounded this threat.

Unlike the financial crisis, the COVID crisis caused shortages of key inputs for capitalist production at a time when they have been less able to force down wages. The capitalists have instead taken advantage of inflationary pressures to bolster profits through price increases. From 2021-2022, 59.3 percent of change in prices has gone to swell profit margins; 38.3% of price increases were for the increased cost of non-labor inputs that capitalists had to buy; and only 7.9 percent of the increased prices went to labor costs (J. Bivens, EPI, 4/21). The higher prices cut the purchasing power of workers across the board, obliterating any improvements in money wages.

Myths about the "the market" are used to convince workers that capitalism is fair

How can the bosses inflate prices across the board so readily? Isn't capitalism's "market competition" system supposed to keep prices in line with costs of production? In a competitive market, capitalists would have to sell their goods at the same price as their competitors. But the 20th century saw the rise of huge corporate monopolists which have cornered the market. Today's monopolists are price makers and set prices as they wish. They are able to escape the "discipline of the market." Monopolists still cannot raise prices so high that the number of people willing to buy their products falls so low as to actually reduce their revenues. However, in industries like food, housing, and energy where people have few alternatives, capitalists have "gone big" on price increases, generating profits over and above their usual profitable exploitation of workers.

To end this insanity workers must seize state power

Governments (the State), far from representing the interests of all the people, carry out policies that reinforce the capitalist system of exploitation. These policies are usually geared to help the extremely wealthy monopolists. When there is an economic crisis, the state can create lots of money and encourage lower interest rates to help such businesses. The executive branch, usually with Congress's agreement, bails out major banks, insurance companies, and corporations, including the hundreds of billions of dollars it provided during the 2007-2009 financial crisis.

During COVID many workers could not buy products or pay rents, so to protect vendors and landlords the government issued checks to families, which incidentally temporarily lessened hunger and evictions. Congress gave large appropriations to big pharma, both enhancing their billions in profits while providing vaccines to workers. More workers survived -- and kept generating profits for the bosses.

With today's inflation, capitalists and their state enhance their profits, while depriving workers of needed products and services. The system is stacked against the working class.

U.S. imperialists export inflation

As bad as inflation is in the U.S., it is far worse in other countries. Why? After World War II, the U.S. was able to establish the dollar as the world's reserve currency. Oil and many other globally traded goods are therefore priced in dollars, helping keep the demand for dollars high. Increases in the U.S. interest rates over the past year have made the dollar even more attractive to investors, raising the dollar's value further. A rising dollar means that the currencies of other countries lose value, making their imported goods that are priced in dollars even more expensive in those countries. This has led to higher inflation rates in other countries and even greater distress.

Capitalism is a system of crises, wars, and suffering

Imperialist war and rivalry disrupt the world economy with inflationary pressures as well. The war in Ukraine, for example, led to European boycotts of Russian energy resources. The resulting shortages have driven up prices of key products. Russia has prevented food exports from Ukraine, creating massive shortages globally and crushing countries like Sri Lanka, Somalia, and Pakistan.

Capitalist classes prefer stable prices, keeping inflation rates at around 2%. When inflation exceeds such rates, the capitalists use the state to fight inflation by creating recessions. This is sometimes called "cooling off the economy." They raise interest rates and shrink the money supply. This forces workers to forgo credit-dependent big-ticket items like automobiles and houses, while the costs of debt skyrocket and businesses are forced to lessen their borrowing for expansion. As a result, millions of workers get laid off and wages fall. Many small businesses go bankrupt and many large businesses close or are taken over by larger companies. Capitalism swings between crises, creating one (inflation) and trying to solve it with another (recession)!

Why can't economic distress be solved without increased prices? Why can't abundance, or scarcity, be shared among all workers equitably? Capitalism, run by the dominant class for its own profit, simply can't allow it because such a system undermines profits.

With today's inflation, despite multiple causes, U.S. capitalists are grabbing the opportunity to maximize their profits at our expense, by reducing our real wages and saddling the world with even more severe inflation. The instability and uncertainty promote deeper global economic, political, and military conflicts. Why should workers tolerate such chaos? We need to smash capitalism!✪

Justice for Raymond

Continued from page 1

non-white workers even less for their labor while keeping decent housing and other necessities out of their reach. Racist terror by cops is an important tool of the system; it is critical to quelling antiracist fightback.

Even after being indicted for second degree murder, first degree manslaughter and second degree manslaughter, Middleton was granted bail and a chance to walk free while many youth are locked away for years at Rikers Island jail wthout even a trial. Even if Middleton is convicted and sent to prison, justice will never exist under this racist system.

The real role of politicians and government is to con or terrorize the working class into "obeying the rules" of capitalism -- "rules" made for and by the handful of the super-rich who live off the blood, sweat and tears of the working class.

That is why PLP fights for communism, a system run by and for the whole working class, where racism and sexism will be outlawed. All the world's children will be brought up as working class brothers, sisters and children. This will not happen tomorrow. But we can fight and win a communist future where it is a reality.✪

JOIN US IN THE FIGHT FOR JUSTICE FOR RAYMOND AND A COMMUNIST WORLD FOR ALL OUR CHILDREN!

Progressive Labor Party (PLP): Read CHALLENGE-DESAFIO@PLP Newspaper @ www.PLP.org

For Raymond, fight for communism!

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

Transit workers not scared by bosses' tactics

At an early morning rally in front of a transit repair shop in Chicago, a railcar repair worker called for workers to fight back against the bosses. His words rang out as the workers cheered him on with encouragement, honking horns and smiles. "The bosses have tried to divide us, pit us against each other and disrespect us with low wages and poor working conditions."

A militant shop steward organized and spoke at the rally. A coworker told him how one of the low level bosses has been breaking the contract, giving overtime to his friends, and trying to micro-manage the workers. This big-boss wannabe had an opportunity to do the right thing - but he refused. He instead drove past our rally and called us some names, and said he would kick our butts.

The coworker who wanted to resolve issues with him was threatened with physical harm by another coworker! But our brave friend said he wanted to come to another rally and speak on the bullhorn!

The threats of this stooge rang hollow as one worker remarked, "We have been through life, and we have been through death (already) with Covid!"

The working class is in a life and death battle with capitalism every day. From the pandemic to floods from climate change to starvation, homelessness and increased gun violence against each other - it is capitalism that has created the conditions for all of these deadly things to keep on happening!

The ruling class in Chicago is intensifying their efforts to win workers to support fascism in the form of more police on buses and trains. But as communists, we say there will be no justice and no safety for the working class under capitalism!

The members of the Chicago Transit Justice Coalition will increase our efforts to organize the workers to fight back against the bosses, the sellout union officials and their rotten contracts. We are having discussions and debates about the role of the police. Members of the Progressive Labor Party will continue to distribute CHALLENGE to the workers and struggle to get more readers to spread the ideas of communist revolution.

★★★★★

Death to royals, power to the working class

"Our hearts are broken" is the message of the bourgeois British media to the world on the death of Queen Elizabeth who is the symbol of 400 years of slavery, colonialism, genocide, racism and imperialism that has caused millions of horrible deaths and billions suffering lives of poverty and misery worldwide.

The contradiction of a 96 year old queen, one of the richest women in the world, living in one of her castles attended by the best medical care and servants and the daily worldwide pictures of babies with only skulls with bulging eyes for heads and just ribs and sticks for bodies and legs dying by the millions from malnutrition and lack of medical care in Somalia, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Yemen and worldwide breaks my worker's heart. Workers worldwide must recommit to end this murderous capitalist profit system from the British Empire to the U.S Empire and nascent Chinese and Russian empires.

Fight for communism!

★★★★★

PL'ers at Labor Day

In the U.S., Labor Day is celebrated every first Monday of September. This date is a federal holiday. This year we found out that a community group that fights for workers' rights and is led by liberal politicians was invited. We activated some PLP comrades who already participate in this mass organization. But this organization, together with other primarily Latin organizations that are now a coalition, was in charge of "opening the march." The slogan of this march was to seek support for the Coalition of Excluded Workers and Unemployed Workers. Along the way, we handed out 100 CHALLENGEs and several hundred Party leaflets where we declared that we welcome fellow immigrants and families sent from Texas to New York City (see page 4).

As several comrades have already been working in this mass organization, there were several PL'ers helping in this event. One young PL'er arrived early to help with materials, transportation, food, and giving leadership, while the other PL'ers distributed CHALLENGE, Party leaflets, and had conversations with the workers. The young PL'er was also in charge of writing several signs for the march. While the liberal leaders of the organization marched with slogans like "Say yes to unions and yes you can," the young PLer sharpened the struggle with slogans like "Workers united will never be defeated." The PL'er also noticed how some participants had liberal slogans written on their masks, so the young PL'er decided to write on his mask "Eat the rich!—F*ck taxes!" Several participants seemed to appreciate it.

We also talked with some attendees. We came to the conclusion that this date does not have the warmth of MayDay: International Workers' Day and it is absurd to try to forget the Strike in Chicago that originated this unforgettable conquest of the eight hours of work in the world. The number of attendees and the joy of the participants was remarkable. It is important for communists to participate in these mass organizations, not only to lead, but also to sharpen the struggle with our communist politics and ideas. WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE!

★★★★★

PLP

Atrocities of the British Empire

Queen Elizabeth and her predecessors presided over much of the most deadly imperialism in history (see editorial about her much-delayed death, page 2). At its peak, England seized nearly one quarter of the Earth's landmass and oppressed nearly 20 percent of the world's population. Here are some lowlights of the British rulers' 400 years of racist, blood-soaked colonial expansion:

- Between 1641 and 1808, Britain kidnapped and forcibly moved more than 3 million workers from Africa to the Americas. About 15 percent died en route; the rest were sold into lifetimes of horror.
- During the 1848-1849 Potato Famine in Ireland, a direct result of British economic policies, one million workers in Ireland were killed; another one million were forced to flee.
- In 1903, to prevent a feared Russian occupation of Tibet, Britain used the British Indian Army to invade the country and massacre more than 700 protesting workers. A British officer told his men to "bag as many as possible."
- In 1909, Britain's Parliament passed what became South Africa's first constitution. With the British working hand-in-hand with the racist Boers, new laws stripped Black workers of all political rights and their land, and paved the way for the legalized segregation and vicious exploitation of apartheid.
- In 1943, more than 3 million workers in India died of starvation after Winston Churchill forced the colony to export all of its wheat to feed British troops during World War II. Four years later, the British Raj partitioned India and Pakistan, an arbitrary division that uprooted 10 million workers and killed over a million more in unnecessary religious conflicts.
- In 1950, a British general conceived of the Briggs Plan to combat communist organizing in Malaysia. British troops forcibly relocated 10 percent of the country's population to concentration camps.
- In the 1950s, as Queen Elizabeth toured the globe for photo opportunities, Britain fought off an uprising by the anti-colonial Mau Mau movement by imprisoning more than a million workers in barbed-wire concentration camps. Many, including women and children, faced "systematized violence and brutality and torture" with "forced labor and starvation policies" (Vox News, 9/13).

GLOSSARY

COMMUNIST TERMS

Fascism

Capitalism's response to a crisis of their system, when the bosses can no longer sustain the charade of liberal democracy and resort to more direct control and state terror instead. Fascism is marked by the ruling capitalists disciplining their own ranks to serve the urgent needs of the capitalist state and weather the crisis. To defend their system from internal and external threats, they use all the means available in their state apparatus, including violence. To build unity within their class and loyalty from workers, they rely on nationalist politics and calls for sacrifice. Their strategy is to mislead the working class to kill our working class sisters and brothers in the next inter-imperialist war.

Big Fascists

The Big Fascists are the dominant finance capitalist faction of the U.S. ruling class. They represent the wealthiest and most powerful bosses in the U.S., including multinational banks like Chase and Citibank, multinational oil companies like ExxonMobil, the big automakers, Boeing, Amazon, and the major media companies. As the dominant grouping since World War II, the Big Fascists were the architects of the liberal world order with the U.S. bosses on top. Their dominance rests on U.S. financial and military power and its strategic control of the Middle East and the flow of oil to Europe, Asia, and Africa. To sustain this dominance, they need to rebuild a huge, multiracial military for inter-imperialist war, most likely with China.

Small Fascists

The Small Fascists are a group of domestically oriented U.S. capitalists who are challenging the Big Fascists over the direction of U.S. imperialism. Since their interests are less tied to controlling the flow of oil, they are against heavy taxation to keep troops in the Middle East and in general oppose costly military bases and invasions. They're willing to rely on a smaller, whiter army, backed by nuclear weapons and the Air Force. They use open racism to build a political following.

Profit motive poisons our class

Have you wondered about chemicals or other harmful substances in our food and water? Do you assume governmental agencies—the FSIS (Food, Safety, Inspection Service), the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) and the CDC (Centers for Disease Control)—look out for our best interest, health, and well-being? Are we safe with high quality food and water? After reading this article, ask yourself these questions again.

Weed killer in our bodies

A Time Magazine online article 2017, (October) reviews several studies, showing that glyphosate, a weed killer known as Roundup, is increasingly showing up in people's bodies. Here's some evidence:

A study published in JAMA tracked people over the age of 50 in Southern California from 1993-1996 to 2014-2016. Researchers found that the percentage of people who tested positive for glyphosate shot up by 500 percent in that time period.

One trial from the United Kingdom, in which rats were fed low levels of glyphosate throughout their lives, found that the chemical contributed to a higher risk of nonalcoholic fatty liver disease.

Recent studies have found that many weeds are now resistant to Roundup, so growers are using more Roundup. (The Guardian 7/9). A CDC study found glyphosate was present in more than 80 percent of urine samples drawn from children and adults (The Guardian 7/9). This chemical is linked to cancer, a finding scientists have called "disturbing" and "concerning." Lianne Sheppard (University of Washington) co-authored a 2019 analysis that found that glyphosate exposure increases the risk of non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

And whether it's weed killer or lead in our water this attack on the working class is viciously racist. There's even now a phrase for it: environmental racism (nydailynews.com, 1/28/20).

Lead in workers‰ water puts bosses' racist system at work

In 2014, Flint, Michigan, changed its water supply from Lake Huron to the polluted Flint River without testing the water. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) declared the water safe to drink.

Residents of Flint immediately exposed the brown color and odor coming from their taps on social media, which the Flint officials dismissed. The child lead poisoning rate doubled. Hurley Medical Center created a health registry and proved that lead in the water was poisoning children. Flint has a population that's 54% Black. As often is the case, Black workers suffer from the most extreme forms of environmental terrorism.

In 2021, nine Michigan officials, including the former Michigan Governor, were finally indicted on criminal charges including manslaughter and neglect of duty for polluting Flint water. In June 2022, the Michigan Supreme Court tossed out the indictments on procedural grounds.

The situation in Flint is repeated over and over nationwide. While the government treats an industry's action to pollute rivers, lakes, waterways and the ocean as a sacrosanct right, the working class's need for clean water is treated as a luxury. Fifty percent of U.S. lakes and rivers are "too polluted for swimming, fishing, and drinking(EcoWatch, 3/29)."

San Francisco Bay is polluted with radiation from Navy shipyards and banned industrial chemicals, mercury from gold and silver mining. The Pacific Ocean is polluted with radiation from atomic bomb testing and the Fukushima meltdown. The list goes on and on.

The State exists to serve the needs of capitalists, not workers

As you ponder our safety regarding the basic necessities of life, food and water, remember the social and economic benefits from pollution are reaped by the capitalist class while the social costs are paid by the working class.

Weed-killer glyphosate in our urine and lead-fouled water in our taps are just two examples of neglect of public health by U.S. governmental authorities, federal, state and local. The entire food and water supply is poisoned by pollutants, pesticides and additives like sugar, preservatives, salt and unhealthy oils. The FDA doesn't prevent the food industry from profiting by pushing harmful foods on us. Why don't they protect us from bad food and foul water? Why is there no effective public health system in the U.S.? Why don't governments care? Because the purpose of government (the state) under capitalism is to serve the interests of the capitalist class. If harmful food and water is more profitable for the capitalists, then the government protects their right to supply it, over the dead bodies of the working class.

Some say that politicians and officials are bought off and the working class can root out corruption to correct the problem. Denying our class' basic needs is a function of, not corruption, but capitalism itself. This has been going on since the beginning of capitalism– whatever the capitalists want, the government makes sure they get it. The role of government is to serve the needs of their masters, the capitalist class.

Progressive Labor Party calls to build a new society, governed by and for the working class. To do so, we need to smash capitalism and its state. ✪

RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Life under capitalism is getting worse

The Next Recession, 9/11–Life expectancy fell in the US in 2021 to its lowest since 1996, the second year of a historic retreat, mainly due to COVID-19 deaths…disparity in life expectancy between men and women widened last year to the highest in more than two decades, with American men now expected to live just 73.2 years, nearly six fewer years than women.

Deaths from COVID-19 contributed to over half of the overall decline in U.S. life expectancy last year. But COVID was not the only factor in the decline. Drug overdoses and heart disease are also major contributors,the data showed…Suicide-related deaths are the third-leading contributor to the decline in life expectancy for American men.

The decrease in US life expectancy was highly racialized: as the largest decreases in 2020 occurred among American Indian/Alaska natives, hispanics, Black and Asian populations. For native Americans and Alaska natives, life expectancy fell to 65, close to the national average during World War II… China's life expectancy at birth is now higher than that of the US…"The stagnation in life expectancy reflects deep societal challenges — not just in our health system but also in our economic and political systems," said Dave Chokshi, a physician and former NYC health commissioner.

Israel's Mossad admits it helped murder thousands of Palestinian refugees

The Cradle, 9/9–According to Israeli newspaper Haaretz, the office of the Israeli prime minister, which oversees and directs the Mossad, released the dateless document that implicates the intelligence agency in the atrocities carried out by right-wing Lebanese Christian militias. The document in question…exposes the Mossad's role in, and facilitation of, weapon transfers that were used in the two-day, round-the-clock massacre of Palestinian civilians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps.

The bloody massacre took place in 1982, between 16-18 September at a camp under siege by the Israeli army, leaving thousands of Lebanese and Palestinian civilians dead, raped, and injured by the militias to whom Israeli occupation forces provided passage, weapons, and protection…"Goyim killing Goyim," [Israeli President Menachim] Begin is famously quoted as saying in a bid to disavow any Israeli role in the events.

However, as Pultizer prize-winner Patrick J. Sloyan revealed in his book *When Reagan Sent the Marines,* [Israeli general Ariel] Sharon met with the Phalangist militia leaders the day after the assassination of president Bachir Gemayel, and abetted them in avenging his death. Sharon told the commander of the Lebanese Forces Militia Elie Hobeika: "I don't want a single one of them left," in reference to the Palestinians in the camps in Beirut.

Mining companies steal and poison in Colombian state of La Guajira

IGWIA, 9/16–Despite this Caribbean region's natural wealth, Wayuu children in La Guajira are dying of hunger and thirst. Exploitation by multinationals, a lack of rainfall and the contamination of their wells only add to historical injustices. Today nearly 40% of the population of La Guajira does not enjoy optimal nutrition,...Indigenous children… are malnourished and since the beginning of 2021, 17 Wayuu children have died from malnutrition.

In recent years, plundering by multinationals, who exploit their resources in exchange for low-quality jobs, and pollution have only added to these historical debts...La Guajira is blessed with many natural riches: coal, gas, salt, sun and wind. The only ones benefiting from this wealth are the Colombian State and a few multinationals.

The Indigenous people blame more than 30 years of coal mining for contaminating their reservoirs. As if that were not enough, the mining companies have obtained licenses to divert rivers and exploit the riverbeds. As a result, the wells that the Indigenous people used to rely on to get through the summer have dried up. The State, however, has declared the extractive industries to be of "national interest", condemning communities to involuntary resettlement and displacement…

Looking Backward, a window post-capitalist world

Not only do tens of millions of people around the world hate capitalism and want to see it replaced with communism, but they have felt that way for many generations. 125 years ago, Edward Bellamy wrote the novel Looking Backward, 2000-1887, a powerful and intelligent critique of capitalism, a system that Bellamy considered cruel and wasteful. But Looking Backward also contains a vivid description of some aspects of an egalitarian society that might replace capitalism.

The book begins with the main character, Julian West, who suffers from insomnia, going to sleep under hypnosis in 1887 in Boston in a fortified chamber. A fire destroys his home but not the chamber, and Julian awakes in the year 2000 and discovers that life as he knew it has changed dramatically.

A glimpse of communism

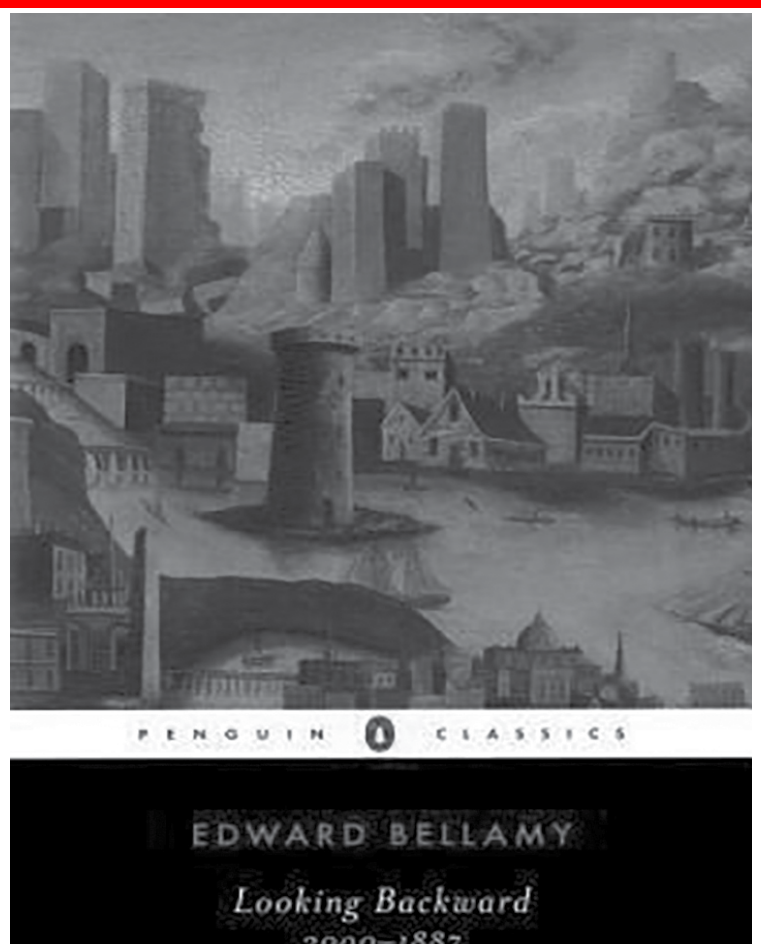
Capitalism's individual struggle for the means of life (food, clothing, housing) under capitalism has been replaced with a cooperative system that provides everyone — men, women, children — with an equal share of society's surplus, in the form of a credit card. There is no money. Bellamy envisioned a new society in which the private ownership of the means of production and distribution has been replaced by public ownership.

Every person capable of working is required to do so, but only from the ages of 21 to 45. Upon retirement at 45, people are free to pursue hobbies, further education or travel. Young people are well-educated and encouraged and assisted to find jobs they are most interested in and capable of doing. Harder jobs have shorter hours in society's "industrial army".

Every neighborhood in Boston — and every other city and town — has high-quality dining halls, libraries, recreational facilities, theaters, and clothing distribution centers where people can select what they want using catalogs and paying with their credit cards. There is no more poverty and crime has been greatly reduced. The new society has more wealth because it's eliminated the waste, lack of planning, competition (including needless advertising), and the cost of an extensive state apparatus (including the police and an army that had been used to protect the property of the wealthy, suppress working-class rebellions and deal with crime caused by poverty).

Socialism restores capitalism

Bellamy's new society is more than socialism. Money has been eliminated and since everyone — those working and those not working; husbands, wives, children — receives a credit card with the same amount, people receive according to the communist principle of "to each according to his needs" rather than the socialist principle of "to each according to his work." The communists who led the revolutions in Russia and China fought for socialism as a stage leading to communism. But socialism retained features of capitalism such as exploitation through wages, small businesses, and some private ownership of land. Thus socialism led to the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and China.



Though written in the 19th century, Bellamy's novel *Looking Backward* the lesson remains the same in 2022: we must fight for a communist, not socialist, society going forward, for a bright future fo all.

Looking Backward was a best-selling novel in the late 19th century, third in popularity after Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin (anti-slavery novel that exposed the viciousness of slavery and helped build the abolitionist movement leading to the Civil War) and Lew Wallace's Ben-Hur. Bellamy clubs sprang up around the country to discuss how to organize to win the changes depicted in the book. And Bellamy wrote a sequel, Equality, to describe the new communist-type society in greater detail.

Revolution necessary to bury racist capitalism

Looking Backward is very persuasive in its insistence that the new communist-type system is superior to the old dog-eat-dog world of capitalism. Yet the novel does have its imperfections:

•Bellamy was averse to class struggle. So in the novel the new society comes about in the early 20th century when enough people were horrified by the chaos, poverty, violence and misery of capitalism and decided collectively to replace it. A revolution had not been necessary, only the widespread realization that the big corporations needed to be nationalized, money eliminated and each person provided with an equal share of society's bounty. Bellamy was a believer in gradualism and evolutionary socialism, which the ruling class will never accept — either in 1887 or today.

• The mills in New England, where the novel is situated, were populated largely by immigrant workers, yet immigrants are virtually invisible in the book, and there's no mention of Black workers trapped in sharecropping plantation system, nor discussions of racism.

• There's no indication that the new society changed the nature of work. The "industrial army" seems to function the same way it would under capitalism, except that salaries are the same. A doctor and a factory worker receive the same pay, although the latter is likely to be less satisfied with his or her work. The new society has evidently not abolished the division of mental and manual labor, a crucial feature of class societies.

• The novel does show how the new society improves the lot of women, many dependent on their husbands for money. But it does so in an off-putting Victorian manner, with women (through Edith, one of the main characters) portrayed as delicate and feminine, which is a little different from her prototype in the 19th century.

• Bellamy's egalitarian society, while impressive in many ways, is portrayed as finished, with no suggestion that struggle would be necessary to maintain its egalitarian nature and prevent the rise of a new ruling class. In the novel, on top of the new society sits a paternal central government that competently plans and controls production and distribution. There's no revolutionary party and no more political struggle, because society is now portrayed as perfect. But every new society is subject to tensions between individuals who subjectively may want more privileges and benefits for themselves and their friends, and the collective that maintains objectivity and its egalitarian features.

Despite these reservations, Looking Backward is a beautifully written, powerful plea for a new world, a communist world. The novel played a key role in the radicalization of some of the most prominent labor leaders of the day, such as the Socialist Party leader Eugene Debs. It can still play that role in our time.✪

CHALLENGE strives to be the communist paper for and by the international working class. We call on all readers, supporters, and comrades to submit class struggle articles, analytical pieces, original photos and graphics, letters, and political cartoons. The next deadline is the **Friday evening of September 30.** Send to desafio.challenge@gmail.com. For some guidance and house style rules, please go to www.bit.ly/338ZJow

All submissions are open to collective discussion, struggle, and change. See box on page 2 about fighting for collectivity and against a cult of the individual.

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